

REMARKS

In view of the preceding amendments and the comments which follow, and pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.111, amendment and reconsideration of the Office Action of June 1, 2005 is respectfully requested by Applicant.

Summary

Claims 1, 5, 6, and 10 – 14 stand rejected. Claims 1, 5, 6, and 10 – 14 are pending following consideration and entry of the present remarks.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1, 5, 11, and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (e) as being anticipated by Martin et al. (Martin) (US Patent 6,704,020). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

Claim 1 is directed to an input unit provided with a manual manipulator, position sensors, actuators, and a control section for controlling the actuators.

Claim 1 recites that “the control section computes an initial width of the movable range of the manual manipulator from its current position to an end of its possible motion according to changes in position signals supplied from the position sensors.”

The Examiner states that Martin teaches this feature of Claim 1, namely in Column 3, Lines 41 – 52. However, Applicant submits that Martin is silent about a computed initial width of the manual manipulator from a current position to an end of a possible end of motion. In Martin, a predetermined range (width) of the movement of the manipulandum (manipulator) is assigned when the force feedback device is initially powered. Martin further advances that this initial width includes two boundary values, an initial maximum value and an initial minimum value. Thus, the initial width is the distance separating the initial maximum value from the initial minimum value, as shown in Figs 8A and 8B. This is entirely unlike the arrangement of Claim 1, in which the claimed computed initial width of the manual manipulator relates to a distance between a current manipulator position and an end of its possible end of motion.

Moreover, based on the manual manipulator current position, the

claimed manipulator has two initial widths based on a direction of manipulation of the manual manipulator from a current position towards one of two possible end of motions. In contrast, in Martin there can be only one initial width of movement of the manipulator regardless of the direction of manipulation at any operation stage of the manipulator.

Accordingly, Claim 1 is not anticipated by Martin and thus allowable. Dependent Claim 11 is also allowable for at least the same reasons.

Regarding the rejection of Claim 5, Claim 5 recites the same distinguishable feature of Claim 1. Thus, based on the same reasons discussed above, Martin fails to anticipate Claim 5. Accordingly, Claim 5 is allowable, as well as dependent Claim 12.

Hence, Applicant earnestly requests that the rejections of Claims 1, 5, 11, and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (e) be withdrawn.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner has next rejected Claims 6, 10, 13, and 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as being unpatentable over (Martin) in view of Levin (US Patent 6,154,210).

Neither Martin nor Levin discloses the feature of the computed initial width of the movable range of the manual manipulator from its current position to an end of its possible motion according to changes in position signals supplied from the position sensors. Claims 6 and 13 are dependent on Claim 11 which was shown to be distinguishable over Martin in the above 35 U.S.C. 102(e) discussion. Thus, Martin and Levin may not properly be combined to reject Claims 6 and 13.

Similarly, Claims 10 and 14 are dependent on Claim 12 which was shown to be distinguishable over Martin in the above 35 U.S.C. 102(e) discussion. Thus, Martin and Levin may not properly be combined to reject

Claims 10 and 14.

Hence, Applicant earnestly requests that the rejections of Claims 6, 10, 13, and 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) be withdrawn.

Conclusion

Applicant submits that this application is now in condition for allowance, and favorable reconsideration of this application in view of the above amendments and remarks is respectfully requested. If, there are additional fees due, Applicant requests that this paper constitutes any necessary petition and authorizes the Commissioner to charge any underpayment, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 23-1925.

If the examiner finds that there are any outstanding issues which may be resolved by a telephone interview, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below listed number

Respectfully submitted,

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